THEORIZING DIASPORA LITERATURE : A STUDY OF JHUMPA LAHIRI

A Research Proposal submitted to

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For the admission to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English
under the faculty of Humanities

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SYNOPSIS
THEORIZING DIASPORA LITERATURE : A STUDY OF JHUMPA LAHIRI

INTRODUCTION :

Diaspora studies is a field of scolarship that has developed at the cross-roads of cultural and literary studies. Diaspora has become an increasingly diasporic concept within post colonial studies during past decade.

The word ‘diaspora’ signifies the dispersal of people from the place of their birth. The Greek word ‘diaspeirein,’, means ‘to scatter about’ or disperse is a combination of dia - “about across” and speiro - to sow over.

The Greek translation of the old testament uses diaspora concerning. The dispersal of Jews all over the world; a dispersion of originally localized culture. During late twentieth century the term acquired new meanings. It’s no longer limits to dispersal and longing for return; it is rather constitutive of notions such as ‘Acculturation’, ‘Assimilation’, ‘Nostalgia’, ‘Belongingness’, ‘Hybridity’ and ‘Transculturalism’.

Nilanjana Sudeshna "Jhumpa" Lahiri (born July 11, 1967) is a Bengali American author known for her short stories, novels, and essays in English and, more recently, in Italian. Lahiri was born in London, the daughter of Indian immigrants from the Indian state of West Bengal. Her family moved to the United States when she was three; Lahiri considers herself an American and has said, *"I wasn't born here, but I might as well have been."* Lahiri grew up in Kingston, Rhode Island, where her father Amar Lahiri worked as a librarian at the University of Rhode Island; the protagonist in "The Third and Final Continent", the story which concludes Interpreter of Maladies, is modeled after him. Lahiri's mother wanted her children to grow up knowing their Bengali heritage, and her family often visited relatives in Calcutta (now Kolkata).

When Lahiri began kindergarten at Kingston, Rhode Island, her teacher decided to call her by her familiar name ‘Jhumpa’ because it was easier to pronounce than her more formal given names. Lahiri graduated from south kingstown High School and received her B. A. in English literature from Barnard college of Columbia University in 1989.

Lahiri then earned advaced degrees from Boston University an M.A. in

English and M.F.A. in Creative Writing, an M. A.in comparative Literature and a Ph. D. in Renaissance Studies. Her dissertation, completed in 1997 was titled 'Accursed Palace'. Her principal advisers were Wiliam Carroll (English) and Hellmut Wohl (Art History). She took a fellowship at Provincetown's Fine Arts Work Center, which lasted for the next two years. (1997-1998). In 2001 Lahiri Married Alberto Vourvoulas Bush a journalist who was then deputy editor of *TIME* Latin America, and who is now senior editor of *TIME* Latin America. in 2012, Lahiri moved to Rome with her husband and their two children, Octavio (Born 2002) and Noor (b, 2005). On July 1, 2015, Lahiri joined the Princeton University faculty as a professor of creative writing in the Lewis Center for the Arts.

In 2014, Lahiri was awarded the National Humanities Medal. She was a professor of creative writing at Princeton University from 2015 to 2022. In 2022, she became the Millicent C. McIntosh Professor of English and Director of Creative Writing at her alma mater, Barnard College of Columbia University.

Lahiri worked on the third season of the HBO television program In Treatment. That season featured a character named Sunil, a widower who moves to the United States from India and struggles with grief and with culture shock. Although she is credited as a writer on these episodes, her role was more as a consultant on how a Bengali man might perceive Brooklyn.

Lahiri's writing is characterized by her "plain" language and her characters, often Indian immigrants to America who must navigate between the cultural values of their homeland and their adopted home. Lahiri's fiction is autobiographical and frequently draws upon her own experiences as well as those of her parents, friends, acquaintances, and others in the Bengali communities with which she is familiar. Lahiri examines her characters' struggles, anxieties, and biases to chronicle the nuances and details of immigrant psychology and behavior.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM OF THE RESEARCH :

Theorizing diaspora literature : A study of Jhumpa Lahiri

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH :

* To study Jhumpa Lahiri as a diasphoric woman writer
* To study her work as experimentation.
* To study Jhumpas novel as one of the aspect of solitude.
* To study Jhumpa Lahiri with the theme of search for identify.
* To look towards a Diasporic woman writer with the seach for Identity.
* 'Alination and rootlessness' as the central idea of her works.

HYPOTHESIS :

* Jhumpa Lahiri represents her works with respect to diasporic elements such as alienation and search for Identity.
* Jhumpa - A Diasporic woman writer along with diasporic elements.

SCOPE OF STUDIES :

This paper seeks to work out how various diasporic literature is represented by Jhumpa Lahiri. Her work portrays the diasporic elements. Nilanjana Sudeshna. Jhumpa Lahiri (born July 11, 196) is a Bengali American author known for her short stories, Novels and Essays in English. Our reserach will give an account and analysis of all her work. This study will zist the life and her notable work which she has contributed to English litreture being a Diasporic Indian Woman Writer.

Her debut collection of short-stories *interpreter of Maladies* (1999). Her first novel *'The Namesake* (2003)', The second novel *'The Lowland* (2013)'.

This study will also interprete her work including stories, poetry, non fiction and essays and translations.

According to the widely quoted definition proposed by William Safran, the key components of this classical diaspora paradigm are safran (1991 : 83)

1) Dispersal from a homeland.
2) Collective memory of the homeland.
3) Lack of integration in the host country.
4) A myth of return.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

The method of library research will be followed field work is not deemed

to be necessary for the proposed rescarch. Internet sources wil be utilied MLA. Methodology will strictly followed for reference.

PLAN OF THESIS :

This research work contains following six chapters

Chapter 1 : Introduction :

In this chapter the researcher intends to elaborate the introduction to the proposed work. This chapter deals with the key concepts like 'Diaspora' and Jhumpa Lahiri as a woman diasporic writer.

Chapter 2 : Theorizing Diaspora

This research topic shows how the characters in this stories survey in the different situation they face every time. The author wants the readers to get explored about the interior thought of a diasporic writers as she is. She had written nine short stories in this collection of Interpreter of maladies to clearly explain the interior thought of every characters she had created. We can relate these characters in our life, or we can consider these characters as our reflection of life. Like the great dramatist Shakespeare, she had also innovated the characters and she had related it to our Indian culture to explore the cultural identity. She had also proved herself as a dignified diasporic writer by giving a detailed statements about the people of native, who lives in other country for their survival. So this is considered as an innovative work among all other works having the concept of diaspora.

Chapter 3: Mapping subjectivities

This research explors how maps frame the cultural struggle with identity in Jhumpa Lahiri's work. A distinguished writer is represented with a unique way. First it is parable for the creation of a modern subjectivity in the light of incresingly complex transnational relations. Lahiri's allegorization in *'Sexy'* extends to the very modes through which we read and misread story, thereby providing a model for critical reflection on interpretive practice itself.

Chapter 4: Diasporic Approach to selected works of Jhumpa Lahiri

Interpreter of Maladies

Jhumpa's work *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999) is about the experiences of Indians who live in an alien country and how they are deeply crushed under the burden of allenation and roothlessness. Here *Mrs. Sen* is the main character, Lahiri chronicles the struggle of the woman who find herself sut off from milleu.

Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies* is based on Diaspora concept which high-lights the emotions, tight corners of immigrants and feelings of disperse of the third world experience from the West side people. It is very painful to stay but it is very difficult to come back to the homeland.

Unaccustomed earth

Her *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008) second collection of short stories. Her book *Unaccustomed Earth* incorporates stories pertaining to relations probing their sense of alienation and sense of displacement. As with much of Lahiri's work, *Unaccustomed Earth* considers the lives of Indian American characters and how they deal with their mixed cultural environment.The book was Lahiri's first to top The New York Times Best Seller list, where it debuted at #1.

The Namesake

Her first novel '*The Namesake* (2003) - adapted into the popular film of the same name. It is the debut novel by American author Jhumpa Lahiri. It was originally published in The New Yorker and was later expanded to a full-length novel. It explores many of the same emotional and cultural themes as Lahiri's Pulitzer Prize-winning short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies*. The novel moves between events in Calcutta, Boston, and New York City, and examines the nuances involved with being caught between two conflicting cultures with distinct religious, social, and ideological differences.

The Lowland

The Lowland (2013) presents a multigenerational family saga built on the story of two diametrically opposed Bengali brothers. *The Lowland* is an ambi-tious novel which focus on the story of Indian immigrants in the United States.

The concept of cultural identity proposed by Stuart Hall and Avtar Brah are applied to reveal the diasporic identity. It is the effect of the process of adjustment, an adaptation to the new background which is different from the previous one. The historical background of Indian American is added to compare Indian American's life as portrayed throughout the novel. This study traces out the diasporic identity in *Subhash and Gauri* which is different and how they adjust to the new culture.

Chapter 5 : Conclusion

This chapter will be an effort to conclude the research work. the findings of the study will be discussed in detail in this chapter. The researcher will discuss whether the study meets the predetermined objects and hypothesis based on various observations. This chapter will also provide some suggestions for further studies in research.

PROBABLE DATE OF RESEARCH COMPLETION :

The present study is proposed to be completed within the time limit as stipulated by the university.

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